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3 March 1959

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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3 MARCH 1959

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Comment on Soviet note of 2 March.

Soviet forces maintaining high state of communications readiness in East Germany. Peiping stepping up efforts to end resistance in Tibet.

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Two disaffected Iraqi division commanders reported under house arrest.

Sudan - Coup attempt by army commanders on 2 March aborted.

Cambodia - Vietnamese envoy withdrawn from Phnom Penh.



III. THE WEST

- ⑦ French say they will remove their Mediterranean Fleet from NATO status in April.
- ⑧ Finnish parliamentary delegation's visit to East Germany coincides with Khrushchev's arrival.
- ⑨ Iceland protests British decision to escort fishing trawlers inside Iceland's 12-mile limit.
- ⑩ Bolivia - Mob attacks US Embassy.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

3 March 1959

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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*USSR: While calling for a heads-of-government meeting in April, the Soviet notes of 2 March made an ostensible concession by proposing a six-power foreign ministers' conference to discuss a German peace treaty and Berlin. These notes, delivered only six days after Khrushchev's strong public attack on the Western proposal for a conference of foreign ministers, probably are intended to appear responsive to President Eisenhower's press conference remarks on 25 February regarding the need for careful preparations before holding a summit meeting. The Soviet leaders probably believe, however, that their terms for a foreign ministers' conference will be unacceptable to the West but that their apparent flexibility on the scope and composition of a summit meeting will produce a favorable impact in the West. [redacted] (Page 1)

USSR-Berlin: [redacted]

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[redacted] Soviet forces in East Germany have achieved and are maintaining a high degree of communications readiness. While this activity could indicate a refinement in communications procedure, it could also be a reflection of Soviet preparation for any military action which might result from the turnover of Berlin access controls to the East German regime. [redacted] (Page 2)

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Tibet: The Chinese Communists may be stepping up efforts to end Tibetan resistance. Peiping has increased its troop strength in Tibet and may be planning to move in large numbers of Chinese settlers. [redacted]

[redacted] Lhasa is under "wartime" conditions because of the "suppression campaign." However, press reports from India describing large-scale rebellion appear to be exaggerated. [redacted]

[redacted]

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

0 Iraq: [The commanders of the 1st and 2nd Divisions of the Iraqi Army are reported under house arrest. These officers, who are the principal military leaders dissatisfied with the Qasim regime, had been resisting efforts by Qasim to transfer them from their commands to the diplomatic service. Their arrest, unless it provokes an immediate counteraction from other anti-Qasim elements in the army, would seem to reduce further the chances of a successful coup against Qasim in the near future.]

10 *Sudan: [An attempt to take over the government by the commanders of the Eastern and Northern Commands on 2 March was aborted after a stormy session of the Supreme Council, according to a Sudanese government official. Premier Abboud, who later denied publicly that there had been any disturbances, is reported loath to take action against the conspirators and ordered the commanders to return to their units. However, Council members, who were arrested and were to have been dismissed, are demanding the officers be disciplined. Although the situation is outwardly calm, it remains "highly dangerous," with the prospect that Sudanese political elements and possibly the Egyptians may become involved if the internal dispute is not resolved.]

10 Cambodia - South Vietnam: Cambodia's continued public accusations against South Vietnam for involvement in plotting against Prince Sihanouk may lead to a break in relations between the two countries. The South Vietnamese envoy has left Phnom Penh after having been named by Sihanouk as the chief Vietnamese contact with dissident General Dap Chhuon. There are conflicting reports on the whereabouts and strength of Chhuon, whose headquarters was occupied by the Cambodian Army on 22 February.

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DAILY BRIEF

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III. THE WEST

7/0 France: [The French Government's decision to withdraw its Mediterranean Fleet from "its present NATO status" now is reported to be scheduled to take effect in April. There has been no publicity thus far and no indications as to when France will officially inform NATO.] [redacted]
[redacted]

0/K Finland - East Germany: A seven-man Finnish parliamentary delegation, headed by Speaker Fagerholm, is planning to visit the Leipzig Fair in East Germany this week, when Khrushchev will also be there. A Finnish Foreign Ministry official considers the visit to be "badly timed." He denies that Finland is contemplating any change in Finnish - East German relations. [redacted] (Page 3)

8/0 Iceland-Britain: [The Icelandic Government on 28 February protested Britain's intention to move British trawlers under naval protection effective 1 March into areas banned to trawlers by Iceland under its unilaterally extended 12-mile fishing limit. A British Foreign Office official has confirmed that these fishing areas are located within approximately four to nine miles of the coast. There have been no serious incidents since last November, but Icelandic Coast Guard officials fear the move gravely increases the danger of clashes in the congested fishing waters.] [redacted]
[redacted]

1-10 *Bolivia: [A mob attack against the US Embassy in La Paz broke out on 2 March, sparked by an article in the Latin American edition of Time magazine which the Bolivian Government had first withheld and then released. The government's decision to permit distribution may have been taken in part with a view to exerting pressure on the United States in a dispute over Bolivia's financial crisis and in part to distract the public from domestic problems.] [redacted] (Page 4)

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Soviet Notes Offer Ostensible Concession on Foreign Ministers' Conference

The USSR's notes of 2 March are intended as a further demonstration of Moscow's desire for negotiations to work out peaceful settlements of the Berlin and German questions. While calling for a heads-of-government meeting in April at Vienna or Geneva "to avert the dangerous course of events" posed by the Berlin question, the notes made an ostensible concession by proposing a six-power foreign ministers' conference to discuss a German peace treaty and Berlin. These notes, delivered only six days after Khrushchev's speech of 24 February attacking the Western proposal for a four-power foreign ministers' conference, probably are intended to appear responsive to President Eisenhower's press conference remarks on 25 February regarding the need for careful preparations before holding a summit meeting.

Moscow's terms for a conference of foreign ministers, however, appear to be designed to be unacceptable to the West. The notes insist on parity of representation, with Poland and Czechoslovakia on the Soviet side, and demand that the agenda be limited to a German peace treaty and the status of West Berlin. The USSR also set a time limit of "not more than two or three months" for foreign ministers' talks which, in the absence of Western agreement to a summit conference, should be held in April at Vienna or Geneva.

The notes stress Moscow's preference for a heads-of-government meeting and seek to give an impression of flexibility on the scope and composition of such talks. They contend that a summit meeting "could consider a wider range of questions" than the foreign ministers' conference proposed by the West. They list substantially the same agenda proposed by Khrushchev in his 24 February speech. The USSR proposed that summit talks should include, besides the Big Four, "interested countries" such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, as "states bordering on Germany which became the first victims of Hitlerite aggression." The notes also said that both German states "must be represented" in summit talks on a German treaty and the status of West Berlin.

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Soviet Forces in Germany in High State of Readiness

The inclusion of practice in quelling civil unrest in training exercises during the period 11-14 February may also be a reflection of Soviet military concern over the Berlin situation. Advanced preparedness is further indicated by a "brigade exercise...forming a ring around Berlin" that has been scheduled for 3 March by the East German Communist party. In addition, this winter the East German railways have for the first time built up substantial coal stocks--a reflection of military preparedness.

Meanwhile, the USSR is continuing its preparations for the evacuation of East Berlin and turnover of controls there to the East German Government. New facilities, such as barracks, housing, and office buildings, are being built near Berlin for Soviet units now in the city. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

No Back-up Material

III. THE WEST

Finnish Parliamentary Delegation to Visit East German Trade Fair

A seven-man Finnish parliamentary delegation, headed by Speaker Fagerholm, will visit the Leipzig Fair in East Germany from 5 to 11 March, when Soviet Premier Khrushchev will be there. Finnish Deputy Minister of Communications Korsimo, a close friend of President Kekkonen, will also attend the fair. The delegation, invited by East German parliamentary leader Dickermann and Deputy Premier Rau, will provide the highest level contact between the Finns and the East Germans to date.

Finland officially recognizes neither West nor East Germany, although it exchanges consular and commercial representatives with both. During its visit, the Finnish delegation may be pressed to recognize the East German regime and support the Communist position on Berlin. A Finnish Foreign Ministry official admits the trip is "badly timed" but denies that Finland is contemplating now or in the "definite future" any change in its relations with East Germany. Because of its important trade relations with West Germany and because it fears becoming directly embroiled in the recognition issue, Finland will be reluctant to take any initiative in recognizing East Germany.

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Bolivian Mob Attacks US Embassy

[A Bolivian mob attack on the US Embassy in La Paz and the stoning of a USIA office in the mining center of Potosi on 2 March were sparked by an article in the Latin American edition of Time magazine. The article had aroused all elements of Bolivian public opinion, according to the embassy. Both rightists and leftists issued statements defending Bolivian sovereignty, while the Catholic newspaper said the government may protest to the Organization of American States. The American chargé noted before the attack that the Communists were just "coasting."]

[The magazine--which the government at first confiscated and then released--quoted a US official as jokingly proposing the partition of Bolivia and its problems. The government's decision to permit distribution may have been taken in part with the expectation that the popular reaction would exert pressure on the United States in a dispute over Bolivia's financial policy and in part to distract the public from domestic problems.]

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